REMARKS

By the above actions, the specification and claims 1-3, 5, 10, 15-17, 19, 21, 28, & 29 have been amended and claims 9, 22 & 23 have been canceled. Inasmuch as the above actions eliminate the formal deficiencies and reduce the number of claims remaining, entry of this Amendment and consideration thereof are in order and are now requested.

The claims have been rejected under 35 USC Section 112, as failing to comply with the written description requirement for the reason indicated in item 3 of the June Action. The amendments above fully address the points noted by the Examiner and now limit the processing of the segments to only those that exceed the specified limit, thereby defining the invention consistent with the Examiner's assessment of the disclosure. Therefore, withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 15-18, 21-23, and 29 were rejected as being anticipated by the *Don Michael* reference, the Examiner having noted that such was being made in a broad manner based upon the formal deficiency of the claim under Section 112. However, with the elimination of the formal deficiency and clarification of the invention it should now be clear that the *Don Michael* reference does not teach the invention as now claimed.

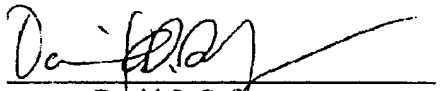
In particular, the claims now define the signal segment duration as extending between a zero crossing in a positive or negative direction and a next zero crossing in the same positive or negative direction (as indicated in the first full paragraph of page 14), the duration time of each signal segment being analyzed those signal segments that exceed a limit of 50 ms subjected to a processing that increases the number of zero crossings during its individual duration of time so as to convert those signal segments that exceed this limit into a greater number of signal segments of a shorter duration, such that echo perception from the auscultation signal is reduced. No such analysis and processing is performed by *Don Michael*. To the contrary, *Don Michael* merely audibly reproduces a heartbeat at a user selected repetition rate by storing a representation of heart sound patterns having a duration that encompasses one heart beat and then reproducing it such that each repetition extends over a time period substantially equal to the duration of one heartbeat for reducing noise. No attempt is made to address the echoing problem to which the present invention is directed nor is there any disclosure of choosing signal segments as defined by the present claims and

processing only those that exceed a predetermined time limit so as to reduce their duration. Thus, *Don Michael* is not even suggestive of the present invention, let alone anticipative thereof, so that the rejection based thereon should be withdrawn.

In a similar manner, the present invention as defined by the currently amended claims is also distinguished from the *Katz* reference that the Examiner has used to reject claims 1, 4, 8-15, 18, and 22-29. In this regard, a simple examination of the effect of *Katz's* processing of the signal shown in Fig. 7 to yield the signal shown in Fig. 8 should make it clear to the Examiner that *Katz's* processing of segments as defined by the present applicant produces the opposite effect from that of the present invention, i.e., the segments are increased in duration, e.g., compare segment 3/4 with segment 3/3-4/4, consistent with his intent to produce a "slowed-down version of the original signal." Accordingly, the presently claimed invention cannot be considered to be either anticipated or rendered obvious by the disclosure of *Katz*. As such, this rejection should also be withdrawn.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with applicant's representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,



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